

VOLUME 45 ISSUE 2 // APRIL / MAY 2013

# RR

THE RUTGERS REVIEW



POEMS 4 U // ~\*ANGST\*~ // SK8R BOIS // THAT'S NOT MY NAME // THE END





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**TONI KWADZOGAH** is an English major, with aspirations to one day play Martha in “Who’s Afraid of the Virginia Woolf?” or maybe just touch Neil Gaimain’s fluffy ‘do. But for now you can usually find her reading screenplays or marathoning tv shows on Netflix and having feels about characters. Maybe her obsession with tv and movies started with Looney Toons. Maybe it didn’t. We’ll never know. One thing we can know for sure about Toni is that she LOVES One Direction unironically. She’ll tell you all about it in her spot-on Bri’ish accent, if you ask politely.

***The Nature of Nomenclature, page 32***



**CARMEN FALISI** is a contributor for the *Rutgers Review* community whose work can be found on our blog. He writes about TV, music, and recently covered a QSA event. Additionally, he supplies us with the occasional butt portrait. At Rutgers, Carmen is a psychology major with a minor in public health, with aspirations to reform mental health and addictions policy. This begins once he gets a few more degrees under his belt. For now, he spends his time listening to good music, eating wings, and going to folk festivals. In the fall, he’ll be studying abroad in the Netherlands, far away from Franklinville, NJ, where he grew up. According to Carmen, it’s “where rednecks inbreed.” Sorry to hear that, Carmen. But anyway, *The Review* hopes that you have a great time abroad, and we’ll never forget the time that the Spice Girls was your first concert ever.



**DALTON MACK** could be the poster boy for why undergraduate degrees don’t matter, having deep aspirations to be a sports writer in the midst of pursuing a major in Psychology. While he loves all sports, his passion is baseball, whether he’s playing it or just analyzing statistics. He is taking the time to minor in Music, however, an interest which he not only attends to academically, but also during his radio show on 90.3 The Core. Dalton is also a big Bob Dylan fan, along with other classic rock gold like the Beatles and the Beach Boys. Needless to say, Dalton’s well-rounded (and exceedingly well-written) point of view is beyond valued at the *Review*. And the fact that he used to raise carrier pigeons when he was younger doesn’t hurt either.

***Pet Sounds, page 26***





**A**s spring semester winds down and graduation looms in the air, we at the Review are contemplating the future. As we prepare to say farewell to some of our top editors and contributors, we're getting emotional—you'll see odes to love, loss, regret, and waiting, and reflections upon past experiences that have shaped our present and future. We decide whether or not our years at Rutgers have been worth the emotional, mental, and physical costs. We pose ever-so-important questions like "Will we end up like those dysfunctional 20-somethings on 'Girls'?" and "What shows should I watch while I'm in my post-semester (or post-grad) slump?" There's an ode to 2004 and sentimental references to the past; confessionals about body image and identity and recurring dreams and violent sentiments. The Review is on a new path, constantly changing and experimenting and growing—we're breaking the mold (even surprising ourselves) and catering to the times. Time is passing and our staff is growing and changing and graduating but their ideas are firmly in place: their impact has been immense and without each and every voice, we would not be where we are at this very moment. So rather than say goodbye, we'll say "See you later," because their words and images live in this issue and in our hearts, and we'll take a piece of them with us wherever we—and they—go.

*Amanda Matteo*

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# *Fireworks & Silver Linings*



BY NIKKO ESPINA

**W**e're all just sitting around waiting to fall in love with each other. We try different people until we burn out and lose interest, or we muck up the energy with our awkward insecurities. We try to find that "thing" through casual dating and romantic experimentation, but the best is when you don't have to try—when someone comes along unexpectedly and a strange untouchable magic instantaneously occurs. I crave those energetic moments of passion and dread having to sift through mundane, average men and exploring the

ghastly unfulfilling dating scene to find the ones worthwhile. I want for things to happen fast and be impactful and to only be able to guffaw at such whirlwind occasions for a day or two until the next crazy thing comes and shakes me up.

During spring break, I attended the National Grassroots Legislative Conference (Leg Con) in D.C. with the Rutgers Student Assembly, and I met someone whom I'll call David. He was this beautiful Russian born Armenian who, luckily for me, had a thing for Asians, which worked perfectly, since I have a thing for Middle Easterners. I saw him



the first day while looking for my workshops. He was tall and wore a tank top and glasses that made him look slightly nerdy. When he caught me staring, he paused for a few seconds to stare back. He was so attractive, that I thought no further about his thoughts on me. I walked on, pleased that I caught his attention at all.

I saw him next at the Leg Con dance party. Amidst the ratchetness, dirty dance beats, and sensual conversations, all eyes were on David as he fiercely vogued and performed intense dance floor acrobatics throughout the ballroom. I tried to find him alone so I could introduce myself, but he never stopped dancing. Near the closing hour, I finally saw him sitting and I went over and sat next to him. “You were eyeing me so hard all night,” he said. I gave him a stunned look and laughed at myself, relieved that he cut through the pretense. He told me he modeled for Calvin Klein, which I didn’t believe. So he took his glasses off and turned his head down towards me and squinted, as if I could recognize his face as that of a Calvin Klein model. After shocking me further with the beauty of his frameless face, he kissed me. “You’re so shy but you want it so bad,” he teased with a drunken smirk. I was in awe of how quickly the attraction between us was unraveling. I threw myself over him and kissed him again, knocking his chair backwards; he tasted salty and sweaty. “I’m so gross. I need to change. Do you want to come to my room?” Upholding my shyness, I thought it over and we left holding hands.

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## “IS THIS WHAT YOU DO AT CONFERENCES?”

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“This is a funny predicament,” I told him as we were lying in bed, looking at each other. His eyes were a pretty hazel. The most attractive guy in D.C., whom I thought would be hardest to get, was right in front of me. “Is this what you do at conferences?” I asked. “Only with cute ones.” He laughed. Then he turned his back somewhat childishly and proclaimed “I don’t like sex.” This surprised me. “I like to do it with someone I have emotions for.” “Do you think you can like me?” I asked. “I’m never going to see you again after this,” he replied. I kept that in mind.

For the remainder of the conference we stayed together, and when it was time to say goodbye, I didn’t want to. I would miss the way his arm draped over me and the way his hand felt in mine. In a matter of hours, I experienced genuine intimacy with someone I had just met. The night after I got home from D.C., I watched *Silver Linings Playbook* and at the end when Bradley Cooper’s character says, “I love you. I knew it the minute I met you,” I thought of David. I wasn’t in love with him, but from the minute we met, I enjoyed our time together and I wondered when the next time something that spontaneous would happen again. Our affair in D.C. taught me to be brave about love because life is too short. So why not bump into everyone full force, since we never know when we will find something that works?





# FOR THE LOVE OF PUMPING IRON

BY DALTON MACK

**A**re men expected to be strong? Does a Y chromosome sign you up for a commitment to being muscle-bound and mighty? Possibly. But that is not why I lift weights. The College Avenue Gym, despite being infested wall-to-wall by the indigenous “bros” sporting t-shirts that have undergone more tailoring than Al Roker’s old suits, is the place where I can truly get away from it all. “It all” is of course the scholastic stress, girl problems and financial concerns that tend to clutter my mind when idly letting time pass. The gym is my sanctuary, and the people who frequent it are my brothers in arms (or thighs, depending on the day of the week). People who don’t and never will know me are more than happy to spot me if I try to take on a heavier weight. Hell, I can’t even get people to make eye contact for more than a split-second on the street.

The segregation at the gym is interesting though: men stay on the left lifting weights and women congregate on the right doing cardio. There are of course a few exceptions to this rule, however without exception there is a fair amount of ogling that goes on from both sides. And there’s nothing wrong with that—we have the libidos of young stallions at our age. But that’s not why I go. And I’m not one of those guys who pretends to be wiping his mouth with his shirt, only to steal a look at his abs. You know who you are, guys. I do it because I get an enjoyment out of it that I hardly find elsewhere. There are times when it borders on a healthy level of masochism, if such a thing exists. I revel in the hard callouses that form between my fingers and palms, and if they burst open and bleed when I’m working out, then good! It means I’m working hard enough.

Now don’t get me wrong—I do want to gain strength and be in good shape. I take immense pride

in the fact that I can look at a barbell on the ground weighing north of 340 pounds and know that I can pick it up (ladies, call me?). Will squats make my butt look better? Maybe. But if it can help me build a stronger base to launch pitches in intramural softball, I’m going to do it.

Lifting weights is a Zen thing for me, and gender roles or not, I’m going to do it. I also play Pokémon, knit and listen to Death Cab for Cutie. I’m versatile, dammit!

## ...OR NOT

BY DANIEL GARBER

**T**he effects of society’s thin female body ideal have received an enormous amount of media attention over the past few years (particularly of the Oprah Winfrey variety). What isn’t focused on as much is what’s becoming the new norm for men: putting on muscle. And it’s worth noting that this is a fairly recent development over the past few decades. Think back to even to the nineties—aside from Brad Pitt in *Fight Club*, it wasn’t all too common to see the likes of Channing Tatum or Adam Levine plastered all over the media. So why exactly did we go from lean to ripped, and when did what was once reserved for professional bodybuilders become the mainstream?

The basic opinion from academic experts is that men are pressured to gain physical size to compensate for the power they’ve lost in a world of increasing gender equality. With that said, most guys probably don’t approach the weight rack thinking, “Wow! This is going to help me overpower women!” But hearing guys in the locker room emphasize physical size and “getting big” instead of muscle and fitness in and of themselves is still a bit of a red-flag. At least subconsciously, weightlifting allows men to hold onto to conventional masculinity through their bodies, even as it’s changed in society.

Regardless of its causes, there’s no denying that men who lift weights make up a subculture, at the

exclusion of, well, a lot of people. For guys who are new to weightlifting, getting started can often prove intimidating, particularly if they don't know the terminology of lifting and getting faced with an aisle of supplements to choose from. And for guys who don't have the desire or patience to put on muscle, going to the gym for simple cardio can be equally uncomfortable, given the relatively strict gender distinction between the weight and cardio areas. Crossing over to the weight area for women and the elliptical for men is almost a gym taboo, which may or may not be enforced by quizzical stares and thoughts of "What are

they doing here?" The end result is that for men, the gym is a space that is largely dominated by weightlifting as opposed to other fitness goals (as anybody who's seen a Planet Fitness commercial can verify).

This is not to say that there's anything inherently wrong with weightlifting. But if we've come to the conclusion that not every woman can be model-thin, can't we agree that not every guy can be ripped? Whether it's a matter of time, genetics, or just personal preference, a muscular body isn't in the cards for every man. Staying fit is obviously important, but if that means sticking to the treadmill and crunches, there's nothing wrong with that. And if you want your body to look a certain way, go for it—just make sure you're doing it for you. **R**



ILLUSTRATION BY NICOLLE ROCHINO





## GOT BALLS?

BY GILLESPIE ADAIR

PHOTO BY JOVELLE TOMAYO

This isn't just 15 men playing with odd shaped balls: you have to be tough to play rugby and survive the initiation into the school of hard knocks. It is normal to finish a game covered in cuts and bruises, aching from the big hits and exhausted from the breakneck pace it can be played at. There are no offensive and defensive teams; you play the full 80-minute game. You are expected to be hard in the face of the opposition – occasionally double teaming a particularly big player – and penetrate their defences when the ball is in your hands. The game is all about performance and has an intense physicality, combining cardiovascular fitness with brute strength and sheer determination. In fact, nothing gives a rugby coach greater pleasure than to see players pounding away at the opposition until the game reaches its climax.

This is all done, of course, wearing no protection.

It seems that the general opinion of rugby in America is largely derived from the classic “Friends” episode where Ross tries to play the game to impress his English girlfriend. Yet the sport is a lot more than the bloodbath depicted there.

In no other sport will you see 28 guys getting down and dirty with a couple of hookers. You may even ask yourself, what are these guys doing sticking their heads between each other's thighs? The untrained eye may simply assume that they had misheard the word “rucking” and were in fact watching an entirely different event. This is understandable, perhaps, in a game where big tackles and soft hands are essential. Yet hopefully one look at the teams mauling each other up and down the field will make any spectator think again,

YOU MAY EVEN ASK  
YOURSELF, WHAT ARE THESE  
GUYS DOING STICKING  
THEIR HEADS BETWEEN  
EACH OTHER'S THIGHS?


before asking if there is really anything sexual about them playing with a ball shaped like a giant testicle.

Rugby is in fact a very serious game and happens to be one of the fastest growing sports in the United States, with around 2 million players nationwide. The Rutgers Men's team are recent bowl winners of the Empire Conference 7's version of the game and compete at a statewide level in the original version. Boasting both A- and B-side squads, the team is able to incorporate everyone from the seasoned player to the complete rookie in a dynamic team set up, driven by everyone coming together hard and sticking it to the opposition no matter what.

Yet this isn't a game just for men. Unlike in European and Southern Hemisphere rugby, around a quarter of all those who play in the U.S are women. It is a sport that is paving the way for gender equality even further. You can watch the Rutgers Women's team live up to the claim that they “ruck like they fuck: hard; hard; hard!”

The team has games most Saturdays and any support just makes us ruck all the harder, so come on down and join the ruckus!

If you like the sound of rugby and want to get involved, the team trains every Tuesday and Thursday – you can find out more at [www.facebook.com/RutgersRugby](http://www.facebook.com/RutgersRugby)

Just remember to go low, keep straight and drive hard. 

# THE REAL LIFE AWKWARD

BY SARAH BETH KAYE

What if I become the real life version of Hannah in “Girls”? What if I move to NYC to become a writer and no one ends up liking me and I get an STD from my totally gay ex-boyfriend and none of my clothes fit properly so I end up tugging on them all the time so they cover my ass? Even worse, what if I tug at the bottom of my clothes all the time anyway and they still don’t cover my ass? Because I already do that sometimes.

“Girls” is the hot new show to take over HBO and the minds of their niche market: 18-24 year old girls becoming women. While we struggle to bloom into beautiful young adults out of the awkward adolescent mess that we created for ourselves, we can bond with the experiences of Lena Dunham’s characters who are doing the same. As much as I don’t want my life to turn out awful like theirs, I can slowly feel their storylines intertwining with mine. Here are the top 5 reasons I’m terrified that my life will become like a character in “Girls” because it’s kind of already happening:

1

*“I don’t even want a boyfriend. I just want someone who wants to hang out all the time, and thinks I’m the best person in the world, and wants to have sex with only me.” –Hannah Horvath*

Dating is hard and annoying. As a general rule, I have no idea what the person who is sometimes extremely physically close to me is thinking. I never know if I’m talking too much or not enough or if this person actually likes me or is just using me to eat popsicles out of my freezer. I want what Hannah wants because it would provide some type of certainty. But also like Hannah, I’m definitely sure I don’t have that type of relationship. (yet). Love, please stop being so awkward.

2

*“I’m so happy to see you I could murder you.” –Shoshanna Shapiro*

This is how I feel when I see some of my friends. But as per this episode, I am also afraid about accidentally ending up on crack cocaine.

3

*“I’m an individual and I feel how I feel when I feel it.” –Hannah Horvath*

In “Girls” the characters rationalize a lot of bad decisions with this kind of mantra. I say roughly the same phrase to rationalize my wardrobe choices, my life choices, and the reason for having leaves stuck in my hair. For example, in one episode Hannah trades shirts with a stranger at a club. I did the same thing at a basement party during my freshman year (too close!).

4

*“I’m attracted to everyone when I first meet them.” –Jessa Johansson*

For a while I had a crush on my mailman. Not like a huge one, but a big enough one that I started sending letters to my grandmother again. People at student centers, on the street, at ACME, near that bus stop. I like everyone almost; especially people with tattoos.

5

*“I’m planning on writing an article that exposes all my vulnerabilities to the entire internet.” –Hannah Horvath*

Shit. This one has already happened.



## FIVE SHOWS YOU SHOULD BE WATCHING THIS SUMMER

BY ANTOINETTE KWADZOGAH

I know, I know, you don't have time, you've got too much to do before you sit down and take up an hour of your life watching television. But summer is fast approaching, and when these fantastic shows roll around, you'll have no excuse (except, of course, summer classes. Or an internship. Or...vacation. Or...)

### ARRESTED DEVELOPMENT

If you don't know by now, (the show went off the air in 2006), this follows the Bluth family, a ridiculous, dysfunctional group of weirdos who are forced to come together when their patriarch is sent to jail for embezzlement. I admit, I didn't understand the hype about this show until my best friend bullied me into watching the first few episodes. I was hooked from the moment when, in the second episode, George Bluth Sr screamed at his oldest son Michael "THERE'S ALWAYS MONEY IN THE BANANA STAND!" People who get this reference already know why it's so hysterical. People who don't; well, you have time between now (reading this, that is) and when the fourth season comes out on Netflix (Thanks Obama!) to get it. Do it. Do it for your soul.

*Returns: May, 2013  
at Netflix.com*

### TEEN WOLF

Before you snort and turn the page, hear me out. It follows the life of Scott McCall, a sixteen year old high school student whose life takes a turn for the massively complicated when he gets a bite from a werewolf and is trapped in the midst of a struggle between forces he doesn't understand. Now what separates this from other silly, unrealistic teen shows of similar ilk, you may ask? The writing is pretty damn good. Not to mention that there are a whole bunch of attractive people to gawk at while you're watching for said good writing. A friendly warning, though. You will get attached. You'll approach this show thinking that it's a fun, silly drama about high school kids and werewolves, and in the middle of season two, you will find yourself curled up in your bed, sobbing into your blankets as you screech about your Teen Wolf feels. Trust me. This has happened more than once. There's a good chunk of time before the show returns, so you'll have plenty of time to catch up on Netflix, which has the first two seasons streaming.

*Returns: June 3, 2013  
on MTV @ 10 pm.*



## TWISTED

This is a new show, but with a lot of promise, and I'm stoked just on the premise. It's about a kid named Danny Desai, who, at the tender age of eleven, murdered his aunt and was promptly shipped off to juvie. Flash forward five years; he's been released is returning to the town, and no one is excited to see him, least of all his two childhood friends, who were emotionally traumatized in the fallout from the murder. When another corpse turns up the night of his return, everyone suspects he is behind it. This is another one of those shows that sounds maudlin and completely absurd, but is supported by its great writing. It is a teen drama, set in high school, blah blah blah, but its characters are relatable, funny, and charismatic, not to mention that the conceit of the series is extremely fresh.

**Premieres: June 11, 2013**  
**on ABC Family @ 10 pm.**

## COPPER

If you like "Gangs of New York," and you REALLY love circa-1860s New York City, then I have something delightful for you. "Copper" follows Kevin "Corky" Corcoran, the "copper" or cop of the title, as he tries to police Five Points, Manhattan and solve the mystery of his missing wife and daughter. Being that it is set in New York around the end of the Civil War, it also explores the fallout from the conflict and the race relations in the city. The social commentary in this show is glorious, as well as the cinematographic quality, and the performances. The show premiered in the summer of 2012, so there's 10 episodes you can check out if you're not sold.

**Returns: June 23, 2013**  
**on BBC America @ 10 pm.**

## FIREFLY

Sorry. Wishful thinking.

**Returns: NEVER.**  
**THE GODS ARE CRUEL.**  
*\*runs off sobbing into the night\**





A friend recently said to me, “You’re so 2004.” At first I was offended, because *like what does that even mean dude and no way man I’m a girl from the future* and whatever. It didn’t sound good. I wanted to resist. But, as it turns out, there was nowhere to hide. Now I know that what he said was true.

**I am so 2004 because 2004 was the best year ever and nowadays everything just gets worse and worse and worse and worse and worse and worse and worse and worse.**

2004 was the beginning of what I call *the absolute last moment of attention*. This moment is made up of the years before our world of communication experienced a paradigm shift via Facebook (2004) Gmail (2004) Twitter (2006) the iPhone (2007) Instagram (2010) and whatever else you use to *get in touch*.

Plus, while 2004 was arguably a scary time (WAR ON TERROR), nowadays our terror is an uncontrollable, vast terrain of everything that could possibly go wrong at all times.

In 2004, Al Gore hadn’t climate-changed us into a state of helpless doom (2006) and *Super Size Me* (2004) was novel instead of the sad truth. The New York Times wasn’t printing weird articles about hipsters in Williamsburg (2013) and the political angst caused by the Bush administration gave Americans the drive to demand a better future (in the 2008 election).

Did you leave your heart in 2004? Ask yourself these questions:

Are you still infatuated with txtng?

Did the movie *Garden State* change your life? (Be honest.)

Did you hate “The Suburbs” by Arcade Fire because their earlier work was so awesome?

Did you like Napoleon Dynamite at first, even though you didn’t really get it?

Is Bright Eyes AMAZING?

Did you hang pictures of Julian Casablancas in your school locker?

Is *Fell in Love With A Girl* by the White Stripes still a really good song?

Does Tumblr make you confused about your identity?

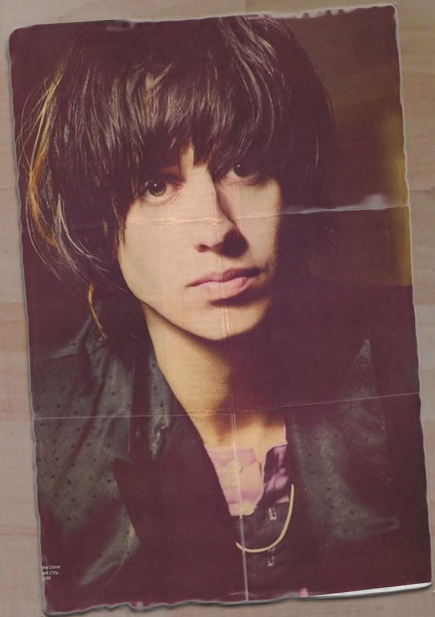
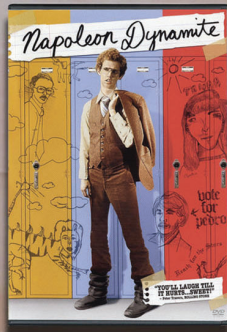
Did you ignore Thurston Moore’s existence for way too long?

Do you still burn mix CDs?

<3 If you answered YES to any of these questions, welcome to a brave new world. I suggest that you adopt my new motto: 2004 FOREVER! <3 <3 <3 <3

\*~\*~\* 2004 \*~\*~\*

BY SALLY REESH

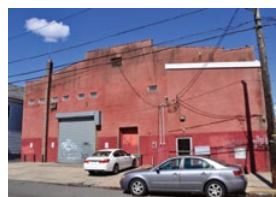
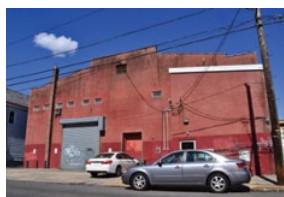






# THINGS DON'T LOOK THE WAY I WANT THEM TO

PHOTOGRAPHS BY SALLY REISCH



## ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT





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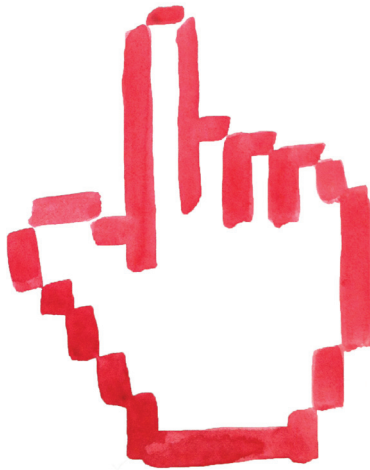
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# A RADICAL VIEW

BY CALEB RECHTEN

I love learning. I do. I also love sharing what I've learned. I think this is why I have such strong opinions on teaching, the structure of the school system, and where Rutgers, among other colleges, is headed. I think changes need to be made. They are not small changes; they are not optional changes, and they are not unrealistic changes. America as a whole is comparatively being left in the dust by many other countries—Finland is an excellent example—and is sinking sand to individuals who are looking to do something specific with their lives. This applies more to some majors than others. But the ideas I'm sharing will help everyone, not just myself in my major. What follows is a list of what I feel must change in order to save education as we know it.

## I) *The Use of Technology and the Internet*

I can unquestionably say that I have learned more from using the Internet than I have in college, both in general, and also specifically for my major. I believe there are many, *many* ways that colleges, as well as high schools, can integrate using the Internet. It's not just about "having" the Internet; it's how to use it for education.

## II) *Tenure*

It prevents new and better teachers from filling in those positions that many outdated and non-adapting professors are holding. Being a teacher is no longer about having facts in your head and then throwing those facts up and shoving them in student's heads; it's about facilitating and guiding students.

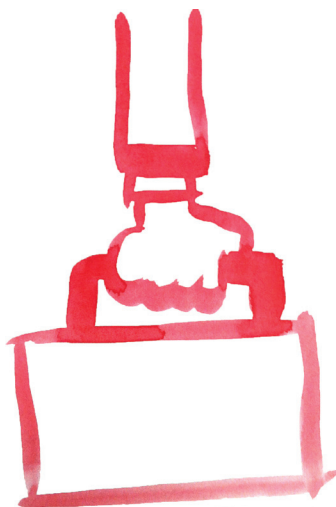
## III) *Gen. Ed.? What's that?*

Point blank, gen. ed. should not be required in college. Many other countries do not have gen. ed. in college. If the idea behind getting a degree is to be specialized in something so that you can earn a living off of it, why am I learning about the bottom of the ocean when I am going to be an accountant? The main argument here is "well, it's good to have a rounded education." I agree, but this is what high school was for, and it's also not something I should be forced to pay for.

## IV) *Goodbye, Lectures*

Lectures need to be taken away. Put them in video form so students can just watch them, rewind, and watch them again if needed. This will free teachers up to tutor instead of lecture, which is better for students without a doubt.

I believe that all four of these can be changed and, if done correctly, with relatively minor cost. There are websites and resources to help with the liberal education. Things can be consolidated; costs can be lowered; time can be managed more efficiently, and we can reach more people with better education than ever. This isn't negative. This is positive. We are in a great time in history where information is nearly free; the way we think is shifting, and collaboration is at an all-time high.



# AN HONEST COLLEGE ADMISSIONS ESSAY

BY EDWARD REEP

To the Admissions Office of *some random college*:

The main reason I want to go to college is to get a degree/education that will allow me to get a job that pays at least \$57,000 a year. Making at least \$57,000 a year out of college will allow me to avoid unpleasant budget-conscious behaviors as a young adult like eating in all the time and living with multiple roommates. Ultimately, I want my degree and education to help me make more than \$125,000 a year as I get promoted. Once I make more than \$125,000, I can comfortably support a family in a decent neighborhood. I could even afford to take them on vacations once in awhile and help my kids pay for their own college.

I want to major in mechanical engineering. I don't find science or math particularly interesting, but I know that the job opportunities in mechanical engineering are many and lucrative. History interests me a lot actually, but it's hard to get a good job with a history degree unless you go to law school, which is too expensive to justify. Perhaps I will take a history class as my liberal arts elective.

I don't plan on working that hard in my classes. I will work as hard as I need to get a 3.0 GPA because most companies are willing to hire engineers who have 3.0 GPAs. When I'm not doing work for classes, I hope to play a lot of videogames and drink a lot of beer. I also want to meet and date girls. In fact, I want to meet my future wife at college. When I enter the workforce, it will be a lot harder to meet people, so I want to make sure I take advantage of this opportunity to nab the mother of my children. If I do get involved in extracurricular activities at college, it will primarily be to increase my access to girls. I may join a fraternity to go to mixers with sororities.

I know this college essay isn't your typical one. I'm not trying to convince you that I'm some interesting, passionate person who wants to learn for its own sake or save the world. I'm being completely honest with you, though, which I don't think can be said of half the pre-med or business kids who write about giving back to the community or half the engineers who write about how they are enthralled with math and science. Admit me because I have good SAT scores, a good high school GPA, and the means and willingness to pay for college. What more do you want? You'll be admitting at least one thousand others with attitudes like mine anyway except they're willing to lie to you.





# THE USELESSNESS OF REGRET

BY SAMANTHA MITCHELL

*Freshman year, first semester:* I hated Rutgers. I was failing one of my classes, not making many friends, missing the people I knew from home. Home was Maryland: too far away to offer comfort when the oppressive gray New Jersey sky began to asphyxiate me. I couldn't take it anymore. I was in transfer talks with the president of a small liberal arts school on the eastern shore of Maryland (that I had turned down to go to Rutgers). Told him I was dissatisfied, had changed my mind. President Whatshisname was delighted, "Come back home! We'll save you a place."

I never responded to that offer. Deleted the email that represented my weakness. I stayed.

**Q:** WTF why?

**A:** I changed my mind about going home. There was a reason why I had decided to be an out-of-stater in the first place. Home became a mess of broken friendships and ex-lovers. I superimposed an image of my stagnation onto every street and field. Still, tearing myself away wasn't easy. I wrote volumes of sad girl poetry about the loss. Somehow, after long enough, I felt ready and resolved to be here. I threw myself into everything: classes, writing, a new relationship, the future. But still it wasn't enough.

*Sophomore year, spring semester:* I was living in a tiny chambre de bonne in the 16<sup>th</sup> arrondissement of Paris. Through one of the hall windows in that building, you could see the top of the Tour Eiffel. There was a bakery near my street called Au Bon Pain that puts the one on College Ave to shame. I liked to wander alone during the day through the elegant bustle, on my way to class, on my way home, on my way to meet friends. Spend any given Sunday eating an entire baguette in the park then browsing the book carts on the banks of the Seine, thinking about an upcoming trip, to Spain for example. I started to think in French. In Paris I fell in love: for the last time with a person and for the first time with a city.

But saying all that is easy, being already so distant.

**Q:** How can I accurately describe my current situation, too near to see clearly?

**A:** My current status is marked by confusion: is all this really worth the four years and thousands and thousands of dollars I put into it? Am I prepared to have a career? What do I even want anymore?

But when it comes to the quality of my present reality, it would be impossible to say whether going to a different school or not going to college at all would have left me in a better place. It's useless to think about. Every minute of the past four years was absolutely necessary in order for me to be in the position I am in right now. Despite my utter uncertainty concerning my future, there are a few things I can be sure about: the decisions I made concerning college were the ones crucial to have had the experiences I did. Had I to do it all over again, I would not change one second.



# DEAR RUTGERS

BY KELLY BARTON

My Dearest Rutgers,

I'm going to start off blunt: come May, **we're through**. And like a lease I'm going to ride you out, but I think it's important you understand that it's not me, *it's you*.

I can't deny that at first I was smitten. I watched my friends enjoy you from my far away community college in envy. I daydreamed about the moment I would have my chance with you, as I drooled through intro semantics courses and classes about rocks. I coveted my RU sweatshirt and coffee mug, so excited about the "real education" I kept telling myself you could offer. And then my time came, and I was beyond stoked. Your campus was beautiful, your location divine, and your classes seemed so stimulating (like, Dinosaurs 101, hellz yeah!). On the surface I was ecstatic, but every pore full of optimism was equally oozing naivety.

Soon it became horrifically evident that your standards were lower than I ever could've imagined. It became clear that you and I sought academic integrity in separate pools; as your professors became increasingly outrageous, and not in the Ms. Frizzle type of way, I realized the pool you were skimming from was full of antiquated ideals and even older senses of style. As your professors walked about as if they were born on Mt. Olympus, your campus was teeming with a ridiculous amount of students full of undeserved entitlement.

And I admit it, I cracked. You gave me grey hair and anxiety; every Monday I returned to you it felt as if dementors were sucking out my soul.

It wasn't long before our honeymoon stage wore off. I realized that you weren't a mistake; you were just a really disgusting splinter in the arch of my foot that I could never soak long enough to pull out; and with every step towards class you only cut deeper. As I spent these past two years with a huge chip on my shoulder, I could never shake you, so at least you've been consistent.

Maybe this is hard for you too, having all my distaste thrown at you this way, but honestly, you should've seen this coming. We were never exactly a good fit, you with your false promises and me with my high hopes; I'm just too bitter for my own good. But I'm sure you'll get over me as well, as soon as I pay off this semester.

I know I said it was you and not me. But I can't let you take all the blame. I should've listened harder when Destiny's Child sang "Bills, Bills, Bills," because there are no better words to describe our grueling history.

*"Now you been maxing out my card  
Give me bad credit, buying gifts with my own ends  
Haven't paid the first bill  
But you steady heading to the mall  
Going on shopping sprees  
Perpetrating to your friends that you be ballin'."*

All the best,  
Kelly Louise

P.S. You triffin' good for nothing type of college.



THANK  
YOU!

## STRIKING A BALANCE

BY PEMA KONGPO

I'm not sure what I would do with \$100,000 now, but I know what it got me these past four years. I can't say it was everything I expected, but if it were, I'd ask for my money back. My time at Rutgers has afforded me memories that I wouldn't have experienced otherwise, people that I can't forget even if I tried, and the time to grow into the person I am today. I came to this school not knowing what to do with my life, and as graduation approaches, I can honestly say that I still have no idea. Rutgers has only opened my eyes to the opportunities that are out there, and I can only hope it's prepared me for whatever road I do choose.

Starting out as an undecided engineering undergraduate, I find myself graduating with a degree in Biomedical Engineering and Sociology. The journey from freshman to senior year wasn't the easiest, but I don't regret a moment of it. I grew up in a household where it was universally understood that working hard and struggling in youth would lead to a better life. Maybe it was this resolve that helped me pull through the quicksand of engineering, but what made everything worth it was the conscious decision to find balance in everything I do. Years from now, I'm not going to remember under which conditions a differential equation is damped, but I'll never forget the party where I tricked everyone into thinking Majorska was Grey Goose (and when they decided to take sharpies and draw all over the walls of my apartment right after).

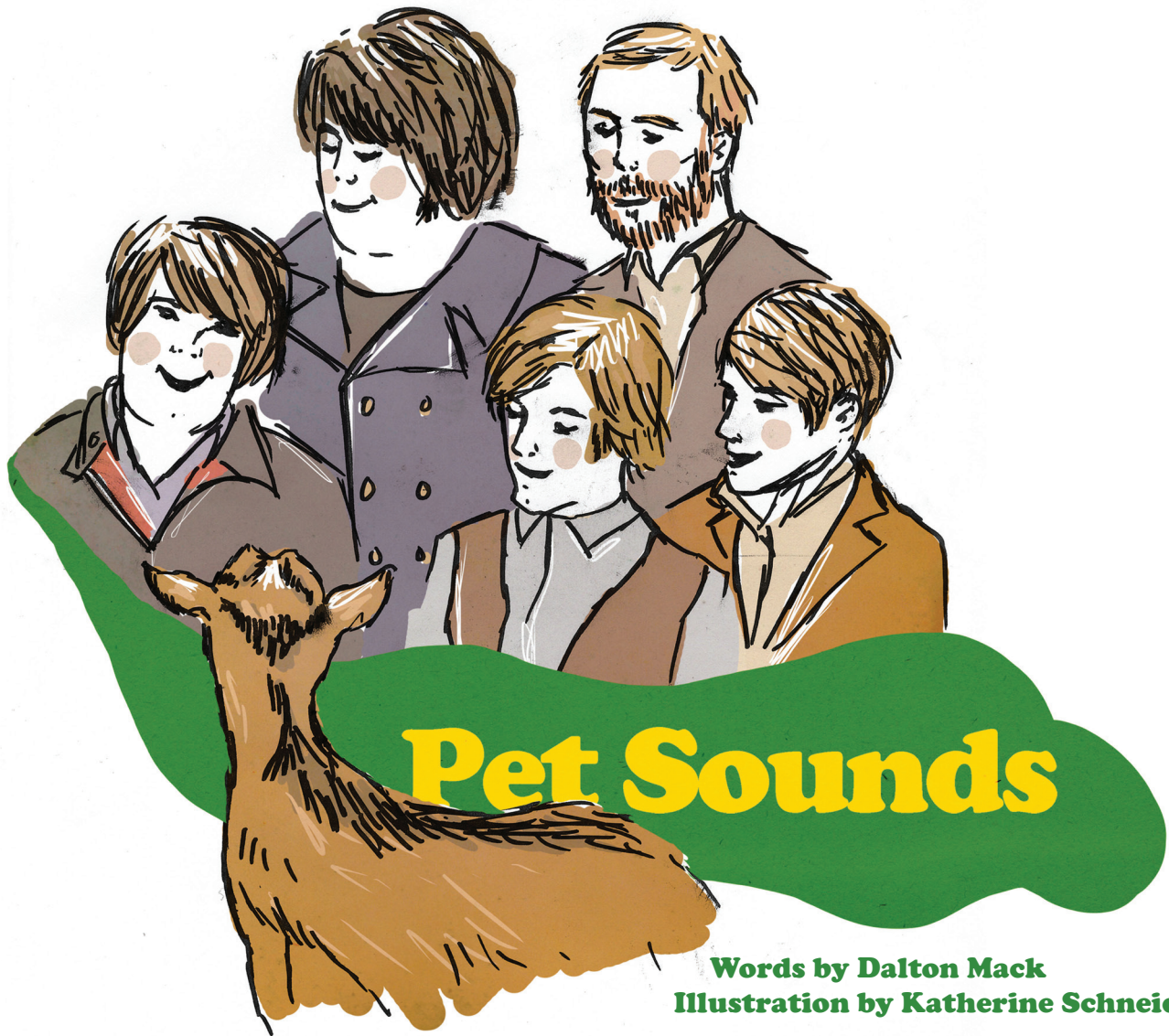
Economically, people consciously make decisions that they think are best for them, and I made the decision to come to Rutgers. As I continued my time here, I learned some serious life lessons. The best was that the only thing you can control is yourself. Despite my share of RU screws, I tugged on and tried to make the best of any situation. Shit happens, especially when you go to a school with the population of a small city. I realized my first few weeks in that no one was going to hold my hand here, and I didn't mind. This was definitely the kind of freedom I wanted. Maybe I could have used a little more guidance, but then I might not feel the same way I feel now. I hated the bad stuff when it happened, but I can't deny loving the good things that followed, and those are the ones I choose to keep with me.

The future after Rutgers really scares me. I don't know where I'll be in 6 months, let alone the next 10 years. I've spent my whole life as a student, and the only thing I really know how to do is learn. Things will probably end up fine since Rutgers is a lot more like the real world than most schools. You get used to using public transportation, paying rent on time, using any toilet when you need one, and holding your own hand when no one else is there to do it. So thanks Rutgers, for everything.



It's really rare that you find people that are unapologetically authentic. People that are real, that know what they want and are damn well going to get it, that never compromise who they are for the sake of anyone else. When you find these people you need to hold on to them for dear life, because they're a rare commodity in these times of collegiate struggle. This group of graduating staff members embodies authenticity. They're about to face the real world but, in the process, they're each leaving behind an incredible mark that is undeniably their own. With this authenticity, there is no doubt they will each take the reigns of their own futures and never quit until they get what they want. They have passion and they have hope, and that will get them to exactly where they're meant to be. We'll keep a little bit of each of you with us always, because without you all, the Review simply wouldn't be quite as real as it is today. We love you, and congratulations from the bottom of our hearts; now go take the world by storm.





Words by Dalton Mack  
Illustration by Katherine Schneider

***Everyone has their desert island album.*** A cliché, I grant you. But to have a bond with an album so intensely powerful, so great that you'd forsake every other album in existence, is beyond special. For me, that album is the 1966 Beach Boys classic *Pet Sounds*. This record is the be-all, end-all for me, a no-brainer for top album of all time. Of course music, like any other form of art, is entirely subjective. That being said, if *Pet Sounds* isn't in your all-time top ten, your ears are just wrong.

Forget that it ushered in its own genre known as baroque or chamber pop. Forget that many notable publications have ranked it at or near the top of their lists. None of that really matters to me. What matters is that this album has been with me my whole life, has mirrored many situations I've found myself in and kept me company whenever I felt alone. This is the album I made every girlfriend I have ever had listen to repeatedly (I'm single now, but I have a feeling it's not because of *Pet Sounds*). And I'm not someone who insists you have to listen to it on vinyl, a group of people filed under "those to set on fire."

I first consciously listened to *Pet Sounds* around five or six years old. I grew up the son

of a huge Beach Boys fan, mostly gravitating toward their “fun in the sun” period, primarily from 1962-65, reveling in tales of girls, cars and surfing. As I matured, so did the music I listened to. *Pet Sounds* left those carefree days in the past and turned the focus inward; the album was among the most introspective of its time. From the pen of Tony Asher and piano of Brian Wilson direct to my ears, the songs resonated in a profound manner, and I began listening more and more, closer and closer.

Take “I Just Wasn’t Made For These Times.” I don’t know about you, but I feel incredibly out of place and step with the world today. Friends jest that I’m their 60-year-old friend, given my tendency to complain about “kids these days,” read a newspaper with my morning coffee, and suffer from chronic back pain. And it certainly helps that the music I listen to predates my birth by 25 years. “They say I got brains, but they ain’t doin’ me no good, I wish they could” smacks me right in the face every time I listen. Sure I’m an honors student, but it’s meaningless if I’m studying things I have no intention of using or applying to myself. Brian sings, “Sometimes I feel very sad” over backing vocals of “can’t find nothing I can put my heart and soul into” and I’m reminded once again of my goal of seeking purpose in life, an often fruitless venture.

The album influences my writing as well. In “God Only Knows,” the most breathtaking cut on the album (makes Paul McCartney cry every time he listens), Carl sings “I may not always love you / but long as there are stars above you / you never need to doubt it / I’ll make you so sure about it,” capturing something that Whitney Houston’s, “I Will Always Love You” simply can’t. And although Orwell is turning in his grave, I find great benefit in taking poetic license with a phrase and putting my own flair on it.

Also in *Pet Sounds*, the idea of love is no longer purely positive. “A brand new love affair is

such a beautiful thing” is immediately followed by a cautionary “But if you’re not careful, think about the pain it can bring.” This album brought a dose of realism never seen in mainstream sixties rock. Looking for self-doubt? You’ve got it. Vying for the love of another with some adversary? Covered.


Bitter truths replace no-strings-attached joys of yesteryear. Girls don’t stay pure and innocent forever; sometimes they turn into hardened, bitchy adults—something that completely breaks my heart as I watch my peers age, a concept captured perfectly on “Caroline, No.” It’s simply not realistic to expect the world to reflect your idealistic views. As a child sure, but as you grow up, the world knocks you down, kicks dirt on you, and insults your mother. This

album helped me get through that phase, and many others. If you’re looking for the prototypical “coming-of-age” record, look no further.

Don’t think that this record’s a bummer, though. The wish-

ful exuberance of “Wouldn’t It Be Nice” and whimsical travelogue of “Sloop John B” keep the mood elevated just enough—this isn’t Joy Division I’m talking about!

I could go song by song, breaking down and unpacking every last bit of detail, inundating you all with gushing, heartfelt and flowery prose. But I’d also hate to detract from our other fantastic writers and artists. Plus, overdosing on *Pet Sounds* before you even listen to the freakin’ record is not what the doctor ordered.

Maybe it’s just me, though. Maybe these concepts apply to everyone, like a glorified horoscope. Whether that’s the case or not, I’ll never stop loving this record. All I’m asking for is for you to give it a listen. Not because the critics adored it and not because the Beach Boys were a seminal act in American music history. You might learn a thing or two about yourself in the process. That’d be nice, wouldn’t it? 

THIS IS THE ALBUM I  
MADE EVERY GIRLFRIEND  
I HAVE EVER HAD  
LISTEN TO REPEATEDLY.



# BOOZIN' FROM THE BALCONY

BY KELLY BARTON



## *When I was 18 I wanted to burn down Johnny Brenda's.*

I didn't know the first thing about arson, but I knew how to light a match and where to get lighter fluid. And while I never really had any intentions of acting on it, for at least two weeks I had dreams about the place going up in flames, all because of a damn 21+ show.

Nearly four years later, if I were to attend a show at JB's, I might just give the bartenders a tip, depending on how much they charge for a pint of Yuengling.

But this newly acquired respect for the 21+ show, or the sectioned off 21+ area at various venues, doesn't just stem from the obvious perk of getting to openly drink at shows, but rather the ability to escape the shit-show that is general admission.

Maybe it's because I'm short. Shorter than most people remember, and more often than not I can't see a damn thing at a show. I'd need a stool, someone's shoulders, or eight-inch heels before I could maybe see over that six-foot dude's fat head in front of me. There is nothing better than standing in a balcony, no



tall assholes blocking my view, finally able to take in the whole room without anyone spoiling the scenery.


Now, I know not every tall person is an inconsiderate jerk, but it seems that every show I attend is heavily infused with them. You know, the really tall guy with the baseball hat brim tipped high, who either didn't see us 5'2" and unders or just didn't give a shit, who plops himself right in front of you (and by plops I mean: jerkishly forces his way to the front where people showed up hours early to get to, then decides he's tired of his trek and chooses

to plant himself in front of the shortest member of the audience he can find). I don't know about anyone else, but I don't pay to go to a show to stare at the hairy lower back of some random bro all evening. Nor did I pay to be someone's shoulder rest, or drink rest, I'm not a coffee table, thank you very much.

Maybe I'm finally getting as old as my grey hairs suggest, but I'm okay with that. Secretly, I'm already 40 at heart, so the ageist in me loves being distanced from the ruckus in the crowd. I'm okay with not getting punched in the ribs after being unwillingly sucked into a mosh pit (specifically at shows where mosh pits are entirely inappropriate), not getting kicked in the head after some moron drunkenly body-surfs, and not getting my ass grabbed by one of the hundreds of mystery hands around me (although realistically this might actually happen more in the 21+ areas). And I am most certainly okay with not getting pushed and smooshed into the obese, flannel-clad, mountain-bearded man in front of me in the middle of a July jam-fest.

Maybe it's because I'm not sixteen anymore and I don't need to be right up in someone's face to enjoy the tunes. While I still, on rare occasion (mostly just Portugal. The Man shows) morph back into my fangirl daze (John Gourley, OOF!), I like my breathing room a little bit better than having my tongue nearly licking the soles of my favourite performers' shoes. After having my ribs slammed into the usually metal barriers at the front for a full set, those bruises start to get old, as does explaining them.

Maybe it's because I love balconies. Like, for realz. There's something ultimately celestial about being above a band, giving you a whole new perspective on the atmosphere around you; nothing else touches it. (Also, balcony railings serve as dandy drink-holders, far better equipped for the job than my shoulders).

And yeah, maybe being able to have a beer in my hand (and not cowering away from that scary bouncer dude with his handlebar mustache) is pretty cool too. 

# LIFE'S LIKE THIS

## 10 REASONS WHY AVRIL LAVIGNE ROCKS (OR AT LEAST AT ONE POINT, DID ROCK, IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER)

BY RACHEL A. LISNER

**1. *Sk8r Boi*:** This is one hell of a narrative song revealing the true twists and turns of fate and giving up a really hot guy because he's too alternative for your exceedingly average peers. Serious lesson learned, circa 2002. Can I make it any more obvious?

**2. *Because we all totally wanted to go to the mall with Avril and just knock shit down*:** The "Complicated" music video began with a debate of the day's activities; Ms. Lavigne asks her rebellious male friends, "Dude, you wanna crash the mall?" And with a "noiiiiiiiice" from the spikey-haired bro, they're off. Who didn't wanna do that?

**3. *Making sure we all had a good cry*:** The music video for "Nobody's Home" most definitely evoked tears from the eyes of hormonal and emotionally unstable middle-schoolers everywhere, myself included. Homeless, battered, and seriously depressed, Avril Lavigne walks the (Canadian?) streets looking for her place in the world. Apparently that place is not the convenience store, which she subsequently gets kicked out of. The video switches to and from an old-timey (actual) Avril singing about the brunette oily-haired (fictional) Avril's homeless troubles. On the potential positive side, the misfortune-stricken version of Avril was seriously ahead of her time in terms of Urban Outfitters fashion, sporting a funky tied-over-the-belly-button t-shirt, and ripped skinny jeans. If you're not in some state of upheaval after this, you don't have a sensitive side.

**4. *Avril's personal life*:** Avril's personal life includes, but is not limited to: being Canadian, marrying and later divorcing Sum 41 singer and guitarist Deryck Whibley, and becoming engaged to Nickelback frontman Chad Kroeger. Internet jokesters, alongside people with working ears, are still laughing at the pairing. Fans are left singing relevant and lyrically-adapted chants of "Hey hey, you you, I don't like your fiancé. No way! No way! I think you need a new one."

**5. *Earlier fashion choices*:** Early in her career, Avril was known for her tomboyish style. Most notably neckties, which lead to a great number of them stolen by teenage girls from their fathers' closets. This was a lose-lose situation, because it yielded unhappy fathers and poorly dressed youths. Despite this, Avril's tie and tanktop, accompanied by baggy pants (with or without heavy chains attached) and Converse sneakers left a significant mark on mainstream fashion.



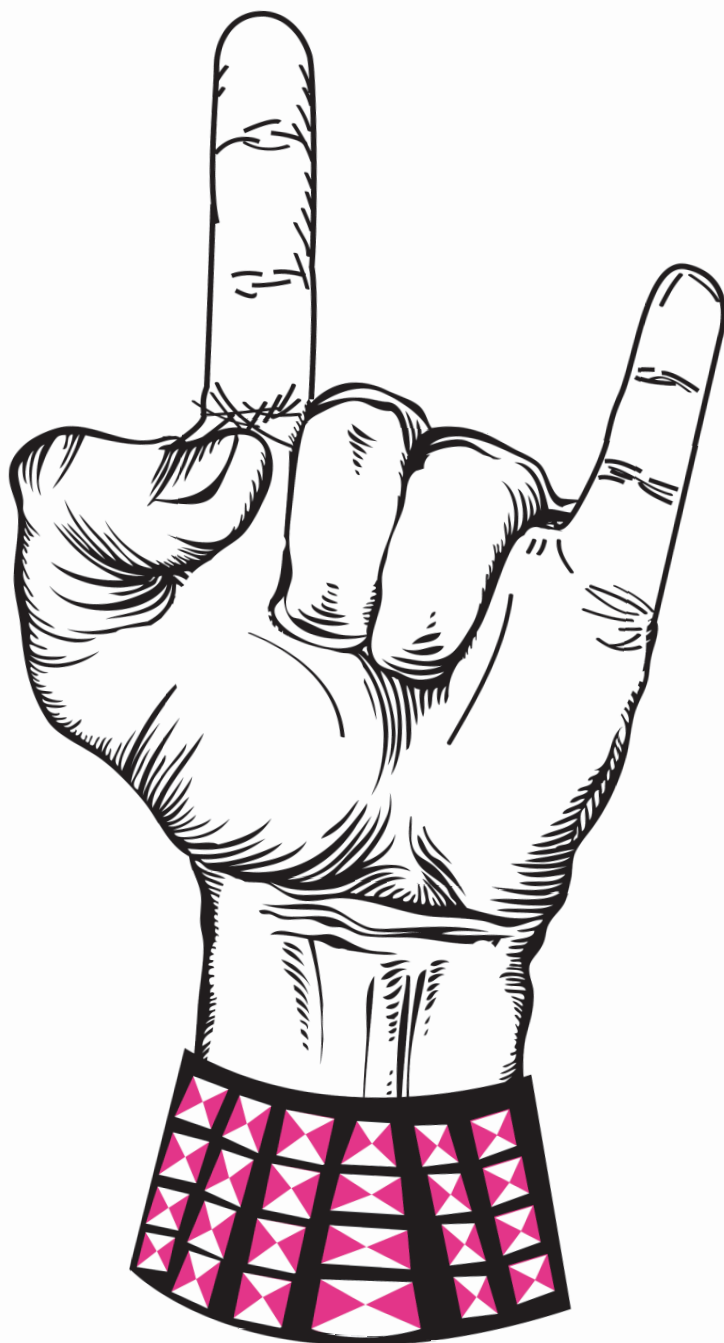
**6. Later fashion choices:** For whatever reason, the tomboy thing wasn't working out, which birthed the girly, but still edgy, pink, black, and white color combination. Abbey Dawn, Avril's clothing line exclusively carried by Kohls, gave moms with an abundance of earned Kohl's cash the opportunity to shop for their alternative daughters without feeling guilty for spending any actual money. Additionally, the black and white checkered belt transcended into women's fashion due to the inclusion of pink. Preppy-turned-punk miniskirts, tee shirts bearing skulls, and vests over dress shirts represented Avril's new look. Girls everywhere chose to go bleach-blonde with pink streaks.

**7. Alternative animal inspired fashion:** Personally, I credit Avril with the early beginnings of the "raccoon inspired makeup", a method of covering one's eyes completely in black makeup in order to look as raccoon-like as possible. This led to other celebrities following in her footsteps, like Taylor Momsen, and that girl from Evanescence. Furthermore, fishnet stockings were a fashion fave of Av's, in addition to hoodies, that when pulled over one's head, had leopard ears. All seriously solid choices.

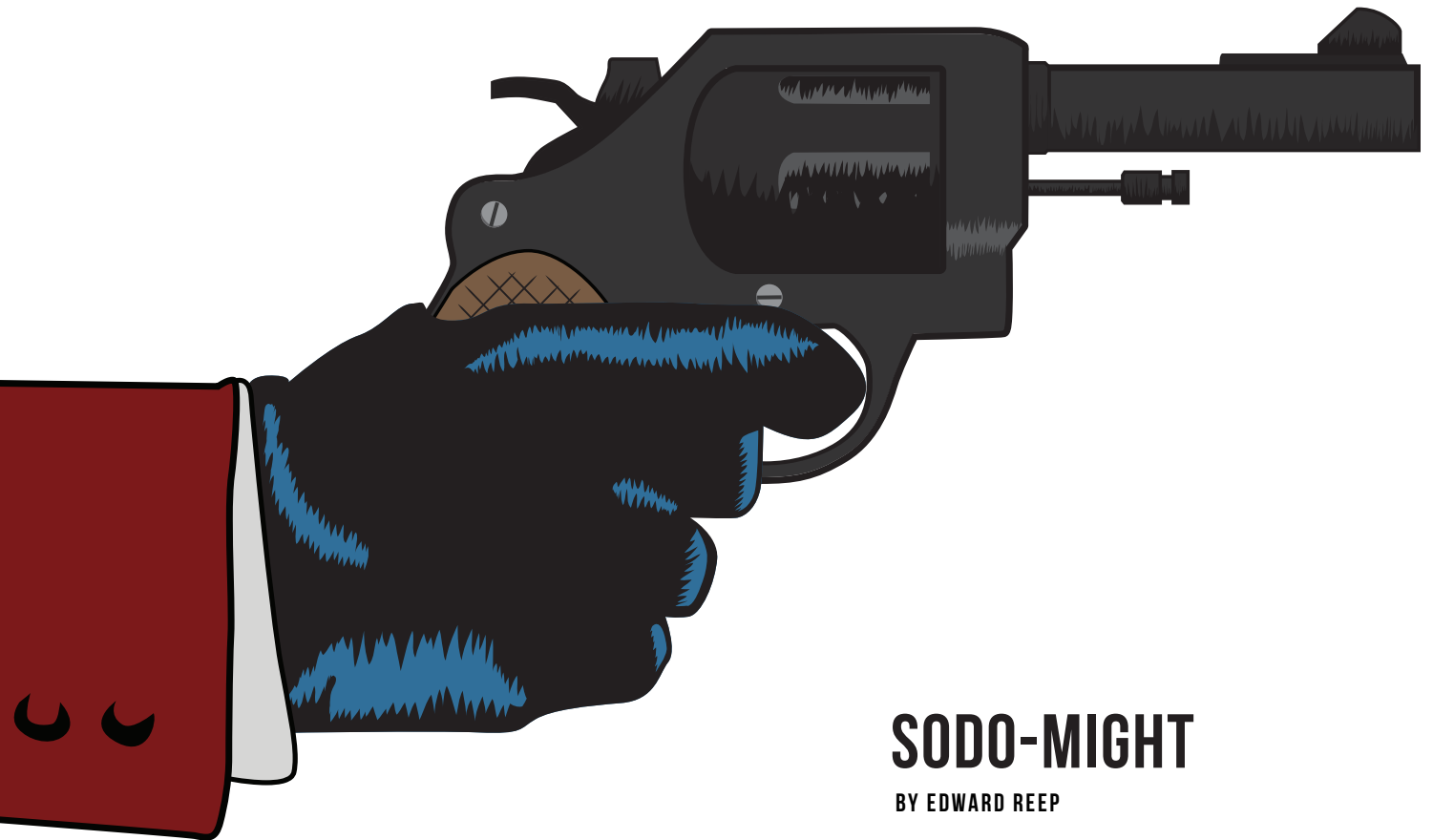
**8. The song 'Girlfriend':** Avril's comeback song, which later resulted in a (settled) lawsuit due to copyright infringement of another band's song 'Boyfriend' (which also bore drastically similar lyrics) provided what seemed like an awesome way for empowered, confident women to assert their dominance and claim the men that they so desired. Ultimately, this just pitted women against each other in an effort for male attention. Regardless, the song was a major hit, and perhaps due to its simplicity, was sung in eight different languages.

**9. The fact that the Livingston dining hall, which plays Sirius XM's 'The Blend' plays her music on a regular basis:** 'Keep Holding On', which was featured in the 2006 fantasy movie, Eragon, which was about a dragon. The metaphor is totally applicable, because the main character is a kid basically holding onto his dragon for dear life. Perhaps Avril felt that dragons were super edgy and unique, because they aren't real animals.

**10. Hell yeah, I'm the motherfucking princess:** She literally said that.



Pre-teen-pop-punk party



## SODO-MIGHT

BY EDWARD REEP

*The monsters, I hate those monsters. I hate everything about them, the way they talked, the way they walked, the way they manhandled me, the way they controlled me, the way they pretended to care about me. I hate them with every fiber of my being. I want them to mentally and physically experience the worst.*

I didn't use to be a violent person. When I was younger, I never wanted to do anything that would hurt anybody. Then other people decided they wanted to hurt me. Sure, they said they actually wanted to "help" me, but that pretense only fills me with more malice.

You see, they locked me up, shocked me, pumped me full of drugs, and told me what to think. They treated me like an animal. They took my humanity and put it through a grinder. They did it to me for years. It wore on me. It ate at me like acid. It made me want to die every second. I tried to kill myself once, strangulation with a blanket, but they wouldn't have it. They weren't going to let me get away that easy. I had to be "cured." I experienced so much physical pain because of them, but the other pain was far worse, the humiliation, the degradation, the boredom, the stress, the absolute misery of being told that you're sick just because of who you love.

Love is something so human, so pure, so soulful, so right, but they made me feel like my love was disease and that I was unfit to be around others humans lest I spread it. Can you imagine the agony of what I went through, the utter despair of being confined somewhere and told day-in-day-out that something so core to who you are is gangrenous and needs to be amputated? Why is it that a man can't love another man romantically? Who do I hurt by loving and, yes, making love to another man? Who suffers? Who loses? I guess I lose because I get put away for being a madman. Love used to exist so abundantly within me. I used to drip with care and affection, but they poisoned

such feelings. They made it hurt to love. I'll never forgive them for that.

*A homosexual who's never hurt a fly gets sent to an institution, and he comes out a sadist.*

Come the '70s, they let me go. Times were changing. Luckier homosexuals than I were demonstrating in the streets, living free. I left the institution but was still not free. So long as those who wronged me for all those years felt content in any way, I was still in the institution. So long as they walked around alive and in one piece, I was still in the institution. So long as those animals were free, I was in a cage, and as every second ticked by, I got more and more claustrophobic. The itch got worse. It started to overwhelm me, and the dream of scratching it was like nectar from heaven. Yesterday, I looked up the address of a doctor and nurse I remember were married. I hated them especially because they were the most vocal in saying that they cared about me and wanted to help me by "curing" me. I wanted to get them the most.

I have a pistol in a pocket. I walk up to the door. The nurse answers. I don't think she recognizes me, but I recognize her; those warm popping eyes.

"Can I help you?"

I draw the pistol and put a bullet

through her forehead. I feel blood speckle on my cheek. It's a happy sensation. I walk into the house and see the doctor sitting on the couch with a book in his lap. I point the gun at him, and he stares at me with his hands up, whimpering like a puppy. He definitely recognizes me.

I'm about to shoot him too when I realize that he deserves worse than just that. For an extended period, this monster, this beast, tortured me. He deserves something torturous to happen to him, a suffering to properly account for his deeds and make him feel just as terrible as I felt. Then the answer dawns on me. Of course. It's obvious, incredibly so. Why didn't I think of it before? It would be absolute poetry if I did that to him.

I work upon him a non-consensual act that makes him one of us. I smile as I do it. I smile to reveal a happiness I have not felt since before everything went to shit. When things feel just right, when I am able to sense that his inner world is fully darkened, I paint the floor with his brains to make sure he leaves this world feeling worse than he's ever felt before. I realize at that moment that I am not just a "sodomite." I am Sodo-Might, an actual sinner.





**H**aving a name that's different is pretty cool. You're memorable. It's a proud emblem of your culture, occasionally. It's often very fun to say. Until other people have to learn to say it, that is. What's in a name, really? A whole damn lot.

If you would be so kind, dear reader, pause for a moment and look up at my last name. Try to pronounce it. It's okay. I won't be hurt if you butcher it.

Now whatever ridiculous ass pronunciation you pull out, try imagine hearing every permutation every day for 20 years straight. That's my life. That's the life of many a person with an "unusual" name.

A non-normative name is not a struggle a person can understand until they have that struggle themselves. And there's a definite struggle. The major issue being when your name is non-standard, odd, abnormal, mad-cap, if you will, you are immediately "othered." The question goes from "Who is she?" to "What is she?" I can't even begin to describe how many times people have asked me "No, but where are you really from?", despite my repeated protestations that I'm "From here", can't you tell? <sarcasm> 'Cause Lord knows you can't possibly be American if your name doesn't sound like it. </end sarcasm>

The thing that fucks me up the most about this is when people are confronted with "strange" names and respond rudely. There's a certain ugliness that appears when people hear a name that doesn't seem like the standard. It's usually not intentional; sometimes it's just a furrowed eyebrow or some offhand comment about how—hmmm—*interesting* your name is! Or exotic. I hate when people say exotic. (Free Pro-Tip: The most irritating word you can use to describe a person is exotic, but that's a whole 'nother article).


A name becomes a trap, even if it's some-

thing that you're proud of. Because a cool name, a name that isn't coded as "white" and therefore "right," marks you as other. Being an outsider, in this exclusive culture, with a signifier as clear as your name to mark you, can ruin your life. Because you become conflated with a "type", often a stereotypical type, and that type creates a cultural monolith. You're not an individual anymore. You're a part of that monolith that perpetuates the type of that monolith. You become the scion of that monolith within the mainstream. You become an emblem for all the things people don't like about that monolith. Then you get a target painted on your back.

Does this sound confusing and exhausting to deal with? Because it is. It's like walking a tightrope. A tightrope suspended over a pit of snakes. Wanting to embrace your individuality, wanting to declare your pride for your name, for your cultural ties, but not wanting to be the foreign kid, that girl with the weird name, the person to ask about weird Kenyan customs when you're not even from that side of the continent.

I mean, y'know, I could change it. I've thought about it before. I've considered using Lawson, my mother's maiden name. I've considered shortening it to Kwa, but somehow, nothing but the real McCoy feels right. It's a pain, and it's tied into so much complex, knotty cultural politics, but hey, what can I do? People will keep tripping over it until they get it right. Or I beat them with a brick. Hmmm, Toni McCoy...

Eh, I'll keep Kwadzogah.

For the record, it's pronounced "qua-jo-gah." My dad's from Ghana. 

# THE NATURE OF NOMENCLATURE

BY ANTOINETTE KWADZOGAH





PHOTOS BY NICK PERRONE  
ILLUSTRATION BY SATINDER KAUR BAWA



## NERVOSA

by Lizzie Roberts

Starve us.  
Took all that we had.  
Sullen, sunken eyes.  
Unseeing to the world  
Deaf to music  
Tasting no food  
Empty of heart  
Shallow of mind.  
A soldier with a soul  
starve for you  
and your demons became his.  
He is a slave for you,  
bones and skin  
yours to take  
and take you did.



## FUZZY

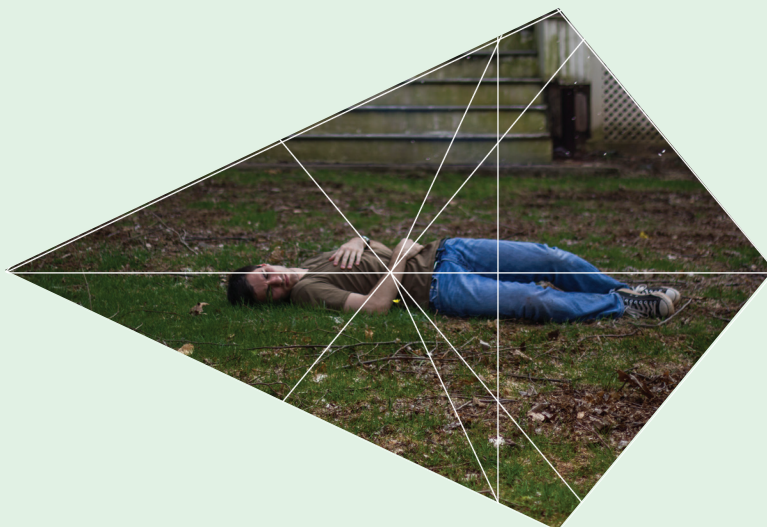
by Kiki Volkert

fuzzy memories meet  
sun through slits of  
parallel plastic it's  
morning

and another day  
of living as this  
body holding  
this consciousness

that defines fuzzy as your  
love for playing with  
bellybutton lint  
and your smile while  
petting a 3-legged blind dog

i'm waking up to another day  
as this consciousness that has  
learned to accept you  
haunting me like a sock lost  
in the dryer because you fuzzed  
me once and i've been trying to  
escape the cold ever since



## RECURRING DREAMS

by Samantha Mitchell

I had the same dream  
Every night it seemed  
When I was small –  
I'd be at the bottom of  
An enormous hourglass,  
Unable to move  
And slowly be covered in sand:

The unstoppable momentum of time.  
I had a daydream  
When I was walking home,  
Imagined hourglass walls  
Enclosing the falling snow;  
Able at last to move  
My tongue to catch the flakes:

I consumed time – before (!) –  
It could consume me.



## LOS ANGELES

by Andrew Smith

"I've got  
I mean,  
My family's got  
two old dogs,  
Sweet girls gray in the face and tired  
getting ready to head out.  
And I'll be far from home,  
For just a little while –  
years they can't spare  
that I can.  
And I probably  
won't be there  
when they leave".



**BY KRISTIN BARESICH**  
**ART BY ANDREW VILCHEZ**

Now you remember. This is why you don't just act on things—why, instead, you map out every germ of an idea to its conclusion, scrutinizing the possible consequences of each fork in the road before any actual move is made. Sometimes you linger here for so long that you miss the deadline for action. All of a sudden, your worry

isn't relevant anymore—you can just plop down on the conveyor belt that is your life and watch to see where you end up.

There might be a name for this—something's nagging at you from your fifth-grade health textbook, the unit on feelings and choices and other stuff you never realized was part of being healthy. You might be an inactive decision-maker. Isn't that what it's called? You see opportunities to influence the situation. They rise like bubbles, luminous and tantalizing. And yet, you can





only stare, transfixed, until they pop and are lost.

The world keeps turning anyway, so what difference does it make?

Sometimes you like being inactive. After all, taking charge of your life means assuming responsibility for the things that happen in it, rather than sitting back and enjoying the show from a nice safe distance. When the narrator throws a curveball into the plot, it's more fun to watch the fallout from afar than to stick around and identify with that mess for the long haul. It's not like you're having some kind of dissociative experience; it's just easier to not take everything so seriously.

But you made a choice to get involved this time. You got a little too invested in this particular story, and try as you might, you can't seem to extricate yourself from it now. These thoughts rolling like rocks in your head are yours to keep. Now

you have too many things to push out of your mind—to keep track of not thinking about—and, predictably, you're finding it impossible to think about anything else.

You could wait it out. That's your current modus operandi anyway. Go to class and fill the gaps with reality TV and mindless chatter until you can deal with the rest.

But too often you feel as though you're just waiting everything out. This is precious time in your life that you are willing away particle by particle, all because these

rocks in your head are like land mines, and they might explode if they're exposed to the air. They dangle in front of your eyes, too heavy to blink away. What you need is for them to disintegrate so they can stop distracting you from the here and now. But that takes time, and so you tug at it, however futile it may be.

You know it's a lost cause. Each day, each clump of minutes and seconds will eventually swirl down the drain, only to be replaced by a fresh supply, dripping like an IV—perfectly portioned and steadily administered. You just can't stand to sit here and feel it all while your thoughts are still volatile. The best that you can hope for is that some of these clumps will be like loose change in your pockets or the sock lost in the dryer, slipping out of your grasp so silently that you don't even miss them. That way, you might just wake up one morning and find that those boulders sinking into your skull feel more like pebbles, and you can relax and stop pressing the fast-forward button on your life.

Right now, it doesn't feel like that. Right now, your head is so cluttered that you just want to sleep until everything works itself out, to disconnect and hibernate until it's warm and sunny again. But just as your brain digests information while you're asleep, it can process and disarm your thoughts when you're occupied with something else. Distract yourself by doing, not by ruminating or avoiding. Throw all your cognitive stamina into working and talking and being with other people. It's easy to live in your mind, but you'll find that you miss it less and less the more time you spend outside of it.

You may not be able to speed time up or skip over parts at will. But you can take comfort in the fact that you can't slow it down either. Time is always moving, regardless of how you feel about it. And sooner or later, that constant flow will bring with it new triumphs and disappointments that will create preoccupations to replace the ones in your head right now. This particular anxiety is transitory. Some distance from now—maybe three months, maybe three weeks—you will have an entirely different set of concerns, and as crazy as it may seem, you will wonder why you ever worried about these things in the first place. **R**





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